PREPOSITIONS AND PREVERBS
IN HELLENISTIC GREEK

NOELLA BUDD

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Abstract

This thesis traces the history of usage of a group of words (‘P-words’) that were adverbial particles in Proto-Indo-European and became in Greek, as in many other IE languages, both prepositions and verbal prefixes. It adopts a corpus-linguistic approach which, when allied with a suitable statistical method and a theoretical framework for analysis of syntactic change (grammaticalisation), allows for the detection and sometimes the explanation of trends in usage which may be invisible to a general reader. However, this method relies on the availability of suitably tagged texts for analysis; such tagging exists for the New Testament, the basis of the statistical analyses of this study, and a few other documents of roughly the same period of Greek, but not for large portions of text from other periods. The finding of this paper is that the method is reliable and likely to produce interesting results once diachronic comparisons and same-period genre and register comparisons become possible with the production of standardised grammatical tagging of texts, a program that is being pursued in New Testament studies and has potential for much wider use in Greek linguistics.

Keywords

Adverb
Corpus linguistics
Grammatical tagging
Grammaticalisation
Greek
Hellenistic Greek
Historical linguistics
New Testament
P-words
Particle
Prefix
Preposition
Preverb
Septuagint
Verb
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List of abbreviations and morphological glosses

ACC  accusative case
AF  Apostolic Fathers (usually this refers to a corpus drawn from these writings)
AOR  aorist tense/aspect
DAT  dative case
EK  Early Koine period (approx 300 to 0 BC)
F  feminine gender
FUT  future tense
GEN  genitive case
IE  Indo-European
IMPF  imperfect tense
LK  Late Koine period (from approx 1st century AD)
LSJ  Liddell, Scott & Jones: Greek Lexicon
LXX  Septuagint (Greek version of Hebrew scriptures) (usually this refers to a corpus drawn from these writings)
M  masculine gender
M/N  masculine/neuter gender (where not morphologically distinguished)
N  neuter gender
N/A  nominative/accusative case (where not morphologically distinguished)
NOM  nominative case
NP  noun phrase
NT  New Testament
P  P-word
PIE  Proto-Indo-European
PL  plural number
PP  preposition phrase
PRES  present tense
PRN  pronoun
PRT  particle
PTCP  participle
PV  preverb
P-words  words that could be adverbs, adpositions or prefixes
SG  singular number
TLG  Thesaurus Linguae Graecae